

## ***Mentor's Belief Inventory***

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This inventory is designed for mentors to assess their own beliefs about working with beginning teachers. It is designed to be self-administered and self-scored. You are asked to choose one of the two options for each of fifteen items. A scoring key and explanation follows:

*Instructions:* Circle either A or B for each item. You may not completely agree with either choice, but choose the one that is closer to how you feel.

1. A. Mentors should give beginning teachers a large degree of autonomy and initiative within broadly defined limits.  
B. Mentors should give beginning teachers directions about methods that will help them improve their teaching.
2. A. It is important for beginning teachers to set their own goals and objectives for professional growth.  
B. It is important for mentors to help beginning teachers reconcile their personalities and teaching styles with the philosophy and direction of the school.
3. A. Beginning teachers are likely to feel uncomfortable and anxious if the objectives on which they will be judged are not clearly defined by the mentor.  
B. Judgments of beginning teachers are meaningless if beginning teachers are not able to define with their mentors the objectives of their work.
4. A. An open, trusting, warm, and personal relationship with beginning teachers is the most important ingredient in mentoring these teachers.  
B. A mentor who is too intimate with beginning teachers risks being less effective and less respected than one who keeps a certain degree of professional distance.
5. A. My role during conferences is to make the interaction positive, to share realistic information and to help beginning teachers plan their own solutions to problems.  
B. The methods and strategies I use with beginning teachers in a conference are aimed at our reaching agreement over the needs for future improvement.
6. A. In the initial phase of working with a beginning teacher I develop objectives with each teacher that will help accomplish school goals.  
B. In the initial phase of working with a beginning teacher I try to identify the talents and goals of individual teachers so they can work on their own improvement.

7.
  - A. If working with several beginning teachers who have a similar classroom problem, I prefer to have the teachers form an ad-hoc group and help them work together to solve the problem.
  - B. If working with several beginning teachers who have a similar classroom problem, I prefer to help them on an individual basis, find their strengths, abilities, and resources so that each one finds his/her own solution to the problem.
8.
  - A. The most important clue that a formal workshop is needed is when the mentor perceives that several beginning teachers lack knowledge or skill in a specific area which is resulting in low morale, undue stress, and less effective teaching.
  - B. The most important clue that a formal workshop is needed is when several beginning teachers perceive the need to strengthen their abilities in the same instructional area.
9.
  - A. The supervisory team (mentors and administrators) should decide the objectives of an in-service workshop since they have a broad perspective of the teachers' abilities and the school's needs.
  - B. Beginning teachers and the supervisory team (mentors and administrators) should reach consensus about the objectives of an in-service workshop before the workshop is held.
10.
  - A. Beginning teachers who feel they are growing personally will be more effective than beginning teachers who are not experiencing personal growth.
  - B. The knowledge and ability of teaching strategies and methods that have been proven over the years should be learned and practiced by all beginning teachers to be effective in their classrooms.
11.
  - A. When I perceive that a beginning teacher might be scolding a student unnecessarily, I explain during a conference with the teacher why the scolding was excessive.
  - B. When I perceive that a beginning teacher might be scolding a student unnecessarily, I ask the beginning teacher about the incident but do not interject my judgments.
12.
  - A. One effective way to improve beginning teacher performance is to formulate clear behavioral objectives and create meaningful incentives for achieving them.
  - B. Behavioral objectives are rewarding and helpful to some beginning teachers but stifling to others; also, some beginning teachers benefit from behavioral objectives in some situations but not in others.
13.
  - A. During a pre-observation conference I suggest to the beginning teacher what I could observe, but I let the beginning teacher make the final decision about the objectives and methods of observation.
  - B. During a pre-observation conference the beginning teacher and I mutually decide the objectives and methods of observation.



- 14. A. Improvement occurs very slowly if beginning teachers are left on their own; but when a group of beginning teachers work together on a specific problem, they learn rapidly and their morale remains high.
- B. Group activities may be enjoyable, but I find that individual, open discussions with a beginning teacher about a problem and its possible solutions leads to more sustained results.
- 15. A. When a staff development workshop is scheduled, all teachers who participated in the decision to hold the workshop should be expected to attend.
- B. When a staff development workshop is scheduled, teachers, regardless of their roles in forming the workshop, should be able to decide if the workshop is relevant to their personal or professional growth and, if not, should not be expected to attend.

Adapted from Glickman, Carl D. *Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1981.

## Scoring and Interpretation

Step 1: Circle your answers in the columns below.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
1B	1A	
	2B	2A
3A	3B	
4B		4A
	5B	5A
6A		6B
	7A	7B
8A		8B
9A	9B	
10B		10A
11A		11B
12A	12B	
	13B	13A
14B	14A	
	15A	15B

Tally        \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: Tally the number of circled items in each column and multiply by 6.7:

Total responses in Column 1 \_\_\_\_\_ x 6.7 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total responses in Column 2 \_\_\_\_\_ x 6.7 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total responses in Column 3 \_\_\_\_\_ x 6.7 = \_\_\_\_\_

The product you obtained in #1 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a "directive approach" to mentoring.

The product you obtained in #2 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a "collaborative approach."

The product you obtained in #3 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a "nondirective approach."

This inventory assumes that mentors believe and act according to all three of the orientations of supervision, yet one usually dominates.

## ***Different Leadership Styles: Mentors Responses to New Teachers***

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In using a **Direct Informational Style** mentors could make statements such as:

I know you feel that the lesson did not go well. This is the way I teach reading.... Here is a sample lesson you can follow.

I understand your frustration. The reason the kids were not paying attention is because you gave them too many directions in the beginning.

I know that you did not get through what you had planned. You need to have your manipulatives ready and on the table when you are trying to teach that type of math lesson in 20 minutes.

I am aware that you are trying to have your materials, chemicals, etc., as close at hand as possible. However, those chemicals are not stored properly. If those two were ever allowed to mix, it would be hazardous. You must move them right away.

In using a **Collaborative Style** mentors could make statements such as:

Your sense of that lesson was that it went well and worked for most of the students but not all. You think that there is something lacking in how you presented the lesson. As I think back, and as the data suggest, I believe you are right. Most of the students were nodding or jumping ahead to the task after you used the overhead and talked them through what each of the tools and parts were for. Let's brainstorm.... Are there other ways of presenting the challenge that might have helped those four students who did not seem to get it?

This is one possibility. What do you think? Could I have been misreading this?

Can we agree that the problem stemmed from Enrique's unwillingness to work with the rest of the group?

In using a **Nondirective Style** mentors could make statements such as:

I thought about your suggestion. Am I correct in assuming that you have decided to group the students homogeneously next time? When you try this, how will you know if you are successful?

From what you have said, it seems clear that you would like to explore teaching conflict resolution skills through active learning. How do you plan to put that unit together? What outcomes are you looking for? Tell me more about that.

You have just described two or three solutions. Let's talk about what some of the possible consequences might be for each. What would be happening to let you know that?

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